



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY DECLARES OCTOBER 15-21 SAFE SCHOOLS WEEK
Encourages Citizens to Get Involved in School Safety

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley has declared October 15-21 as Safe Schools Week in North Carolina and challenges citizens across the state to become active participants in guaranteeing school safety. The proclamation follows the Governor's directive last week for a comprehensive review of school safety programs in the state.

"North Carolinians are well aware of the very real threat posed by school violence," Easley said. "The challenge for our schools is to recognize and assume their security roles while maintaining their focus on the academic mission, and that is harder than ever in today's society."

In recognition of Safe Schools Week, the North Carolina Center for the Prevention of School Violence will be distributing posters to schools across the state to raise awareness about school safety and promote student involvement. The poster campaign encourages students to notify a teacher, parent, or trusted adult of any suspicious activity they observe. In addition, students can take responsibility for their own school safety by contacting the North Carolina Safe Schools Tip Line at 1-888-960-9600. The tip line is an anonymous reporting system available to any student or citizen who wants to report a school safety concern.

Also this week, the State Highway Patrol will conduct *Operation Stop Arm*, an aggressive crackdown on motorists who pass stopped school buses. Troopers will patrol in school zones across the state and will follow school buses to catch violators.

On October 9, Gov. Easley asked Secretary Bryan Beatty of the Department of Crime Control & Public Safety and Attorney General Roy Cooper to coordinate a comprehensive review of North Carolina's school safety programs. Beatty and Cooper will work with the Department of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education and the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to assess current efforts and determine if additional measures should be taken to better protect the state's school students. Easley also asked Health and Human Services Secretary Carmen Hooker-Odom to provide assistance due to the emotional impact the recent incidents may have on students.

North Carolina has been proactive on the issue of school safety since the early 1990s. When Easley was Attorney General, he worked on a review of school safety that resulted in the creation of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence. The Center is located in the Juvenile Justice department. It serves as a clearinghouse for information on school violence prevention and provides technical assistance to those involved with safe schools and positive youth development.

More information, including a copy of the Governor's safe schools week proclamation, is available at www.cpsv.org.